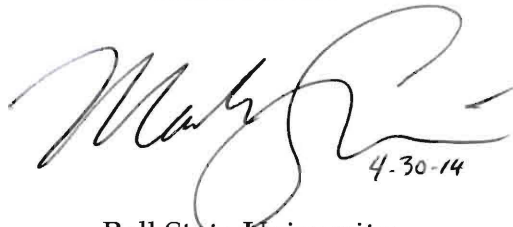


Streets of Buenos Aires
An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by
Kelly McMasters

Thesis Advisor
Mark Sawrie

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Sawrie', with a date '4-30-14' written below it.

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May 2014

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Abstract

Streets of Buenos Aires is a book that captures the culture, history, and the people of Buenos Aires through the utilization of photography and supporting research. The purpose of this work was to create an eye opening experience for the viewer where he or she could not only read about the cultural differences in South America, but also see those descriptions come to life through photography. This book was created not only to bring awareness to the general public of Argentina's culture, but also to provide other students interested in study abroad with a reference to a peer's experience abroad. *Streets of Buenos Aires* will be distributed through relevant offices on campus such as the Honors College and Rinker Center, in order to share the information that has been gathered.

The main components of this project include photography, supporting research, and the physical production of a book through blurb.com. *Streets of Buenos Aires* is divided into four central chapters: culture, professions, the national strike, and the life of the city. These divisions were created to organize a broad scope of the successes, struggles, and cultural differences of an Argentine's life.

Acknowledgement

I would like to give a special thanks to Mark Sawrie for advising me through this project. Through this exceedingly long process he has been supportive and willing to help with any questions that arose. He has also made me aware of other opportunities where I could apply and submit my final book.

I would also like to acknowledge a few other individuals who played major and very specific parts in the editing process of this book. Thanks to Dr. John Dizgun for his advising in the content of my book. Due to his outstanding knowledge and understanding of the country, I was able to clarify my writing to summarize historical and cultural key points in a relatively limited amount of text. I would like to thank Barbara Ewald for her critical grammar and content editing. She went out of her way to file through multiple rounds of edits and helped refine this book bounds beyond the original drafts. A final thanks to Sam Minor who assisted with graphic design questions and critiques. His input, not only on this project, but throughout my four years here has been irreplaceable.

I would also like to thank Jenny, Hannah, Jacinda, and Audrey for encouraging me to pursue this daunting task.

Author's Statement

There is no greater inspiration in life than the world and experiences that encompass our lives. Sprouting with my adventure abroad to Buenos Aires, Argentina and reaching full bloom in Muncie, IN, photography and research led my exploration and development of new artistic and personal growth. Not only did this project fuel my desire to learn, but it combined many of my passions into a cohesive production, which is now available to encourage others to seek new experiences.

In the summer of 2012, when I visited Argentina with the KIIS Study Abroad program, I went with no expectation of creating a book. There were two main factors, which inspired this unanticipated path. My initial inspirations were the two classes I took abroad. One class was a history course, which sparked my interest in the rich political and cultural past the country held. My other course, which was focused on street scenes photography, only continued to feed and challenge my passion for the art. It also expanded my interest in street photography, in which I had only dabbled. This course initiated the other source of my inspiration, which I found radiating from the people in the streets. As I challenged myself to become an observer and absorb the culture that surrounded me, I was overcome with questions and curiosity. Through photography, I was first able to capture things I found interest in and upon returning to the states I was able to do further research and discover in what I had been immersed. This opportunity to create a book brought my studies abroad full circle as much of my history course carried into the final product.

While I was only in Buenos Aires for just about a month, I collected quite the mass assortment of 5,000 plus images. Upon my return to the US, the tedious and multiple reviews to narrow down my images began. First, I was trying to choose eight to print, which would complete the independent credit I was receiving for my photo class. After realizing I had way more than eight photos I wanted to share, the idea of a book began to grow. This required me to narrow down my images to strongest and to categorize them by content. After looking at my groupings of selected photos, I felt that culture, professions, and the national strike were the strongest components. The remaining photos and elements of the Argentine lifestyle I paired into the *Life of the City* chapter and I also tried to cover vital information that was not paired with a picture in the chapter introductions.

Condensing all of this information into a cohesive book took quite a bit of selective decision making, but tying this project into my area of study was effortless. As a designer, I have been taught to work with variables such as body copy, photography, and different mediums. This project allowed me to not only put these lessons into practice, but also use them in tandem with a professional printing company. I was able to use my design knowledge of InDesign to format the book, make sure it was prepared for the printers, and to even communicate with the customer service of the blurb.com. My design studies were clearly utilized, but my writing skills were still challenged, which falls more inline with my studies in the Honors College.

As an artist and for my future endeavors, this project has become a huge stepping-stone. To start, it has been a huge portfolio builder. I have been to a few interviews and portfolio reviews and I keep receiving consistent feedback about the level of professionalism of the project. It is a project I have poured myself into and that connection and enthusiasm rings as I present *Streets of Buenos Aires* to each new potential employer.

Even more important than building up my opportunity for future careers, the development of this book helped me discover where my true passion lies. I now recognize my passion, not just for making books, but for creating tactile forms that people can hold, feel, and connect to. I realized building that physical connection for others is extremely important to me and I want my future to incorporate that link between the design product and the viewer. On top of my newfound passion for tactile design, I expanded my previous passion for photography. When first dabbling in photography I stuck to the standard still life set ups, inanimate objects, and immobile subjects. As I have grown into the medium, I shed the fear of judgment from others and embraced the rawness of human nature and interaction. I have found the beauty, sense of emotion, and the stories each individual has to share just from their existence. Being able to capture each person's unique characteristics has become one of my greatest and most cherished challenges. This desire to capture the human spirit through photography was sparked by forcing myself to adventure into the streets and explore people and places that were so foreign. While my exact path in the career path is still unlabeled, I feel confident that photography and bookmaking will hold a strong influence in my future.

Supplements

The physical book is included in this slip, but the book is also available online for digital viewing. Follow the link and view full screen for a high resolution.

<http://www.blurb.com/books/5331935-streets-of-buenos-aires>

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A photograph of two children sitting on a concrete bench in an urban setting. The child on the left is wearing a white hoodie over a colorful patterned sweater and is drawing on a piece of paper with a green marker. The child on the right is wearing a light blue hoodie over a dark patterned sweater and is also drawing on a piece of paper. A small purple pouch sits on the bench between them. The background is a wall with large, colorful panels in shades of blue, orange, and yellow. A metal door is visible on the left. The ground is paved with light-colored bricks. The title 'STREETS OF BUENOS AIRES' is printed in white capital letters on the right side of the image, and the author's name 'KELLY MCMASTERS' is printed in smaller white capital letters below it.

STREETS OF BUENOS AIRES

KELLY MCMASTERS



Photography is a journey, an outlet, form of expression, and a passion that brings so much joy to my life. As my skills have developed from yearbook shots to newspaper photojournalism, senior pictures to wedding photography, and personal images to spontaneous street photography, I have grown and continue to learn the art of capturing genuine moments. In the past few years I have immersed myself in the world around me trying to document my surrounds, but more importantly, the people who fill the area and give the space meaning. Whether it's family that makes a place home, or strangers who create an atmosphere of excitement and joy, those people make a place come to life. What better way to document life than to capture images of the very beings that give our surroundings meaning?



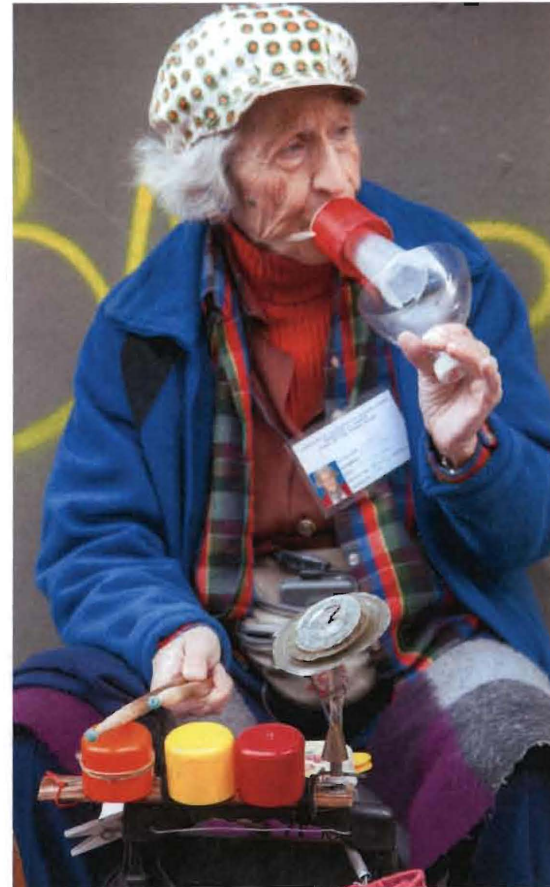
A special thanks to John Dizgun, Barbara Ewald, Mark Sawrie, Sam Minor, and all of the friends, family, and professors who helped make this book possible.

COVER PHOTO

Two girls enjoying a small street festival in Once, a struggling barrio in Buenos Aires. Once contains a very diverse population in terms of race and religion. Some examples of communities in the area include, but are not limited to: Jews, Koreans, Arabs, Peruvians, and Indians.

INSIDE PAGE

In the barrio La Boca, conventillos are common living arrangements for underprivileged families. These accommodations were not constructed for durability; rather, they were made to house multiple families near the ports where jobs could be found for European newcomers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



PEOPLE:

THE HEART & SOUL
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

In the summer of 2012, I spent a month in Buenos Aires for a KIIS study abroad program. As I ventured through this foreign place, the streets came alive as the Argentines went about their daily activities. Their daily routines began to create an image for this great city; an image of success, but also of struggle. Their actions began to describe their individual being, but also to create a persona for the city.

As a photographer I strive to find beauty and interest in all scenes of life. I find that people on the streets are the most versatile and intriguing characters to photograph. This is the reason I decided to focus my series on Argentines in the city. I find it compelling how *Porteños* present themselves and as a result how others perceive them as individuals. The way people interact in the streets and the markets is also captivating; their body language, facial expressions, and actions are distinct and direct. As I explored Buenos Aires, I strove to find *Porteños* living in their element, and I honed in on those characters in the streets that help sculpt Buenos Aires into the city it is today: cosmopolitan city, which despite the large wealth gap, economic disparities, and political corruption, has continued to function through determination and perseverance.

Accessibility to my work is something that I find essential. This is why I have chosen a book format for my photography. Books give the creator the ability to reproduce his or her work, pass it around to others, and this book will even be viewable online. There are many scenes in the world that never reach our eyes, but books help educate others and expand horizons.

CULTURE

Buenos Aires is the melting pot of South America, which is highlighted as travelers and natives blend in the streets. Between 1870 until 1914, this port city filled with a wave of Spanish and Italian immigrants who relocated for multiple reasons. Industrialization was one of the major causes. Immigrants would seek work, then send money back to their families who were suffering in poor economies with food shortages due to the decline in the agriculture sector. Another draw was that Argentina had a lot of available land to offer. Due to political theorist and diplomat, Juan Bautista Alberdi's influence, the government promoted a major pull to "whiten" the population. Alberdi supported this pattern of immigration because he believed that Europeans already had an established method of order, education, and hard work. People continued to flow into Argentina from South American countries such as Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, and Peru for the hope of a brighter future. Due to this extreme blend of origins, Buenos Aires has formed a richly diverse culture of its own.

Porteños, which are people who live in Buenos Aires, share overlapping traditions that are borrowed from many cultures. The tango is a perfect example of multiple cultures fusing to create a new cultural variable. This dance originated from a combination of the Spanish habanera and even more by a solo Afro-Argentine dance, the milonga. Initially, the tango started evolving in outer barrios and lower class "dance academies," which were essentially brothels. By the early twentieth century, Paris's upper class had embraced the tango, which elevated the dance to a level of sophistication and high stature. Once Argentines caught wind of European acceptance, the dance became a cultural signifier of

Argentina. The popularity of this passionate dance lives on today through couples performing in street plazas and professionals performing at upscale tango shows.

Many other arts and theatre productions thrive in the city. The Teatro Colón Opera House is a prime example of the outstanding facilities available to the public. Not only is it breathtaking with its Parisian influenced, Belle Époque theater, but also it is recognized as one of the top five acoustical venues in the world. Another interesting fact about this extravagant theatre is that beneath the stage lie three floors full of an assortment of storage, including 30,000 pairs of shoes.

Soccer is an additional form of entertainment that is close to the hearts of Argentines. As you can see in the picture to the right, the love of soccer starts at a young age and citizens often play in neighborhood parks. Argentines not only enjoy playing the game, but also watching the professionals is quite the spectacle. It is easy to recognize the Porteños' enthusiasm as car horns honk and "Gooooaaal!" echoes throughout the city. Argentina has multiple World Cup titles and even hosted the competition in 1978. However, many were outraged by the government's use of the World Cup to divert the world away from the ongoing "Dirty War" and the military's abuse of human rights. Considering Argentines have been victims of many social injustices, soccer is an outlet that provides comfort and equality.

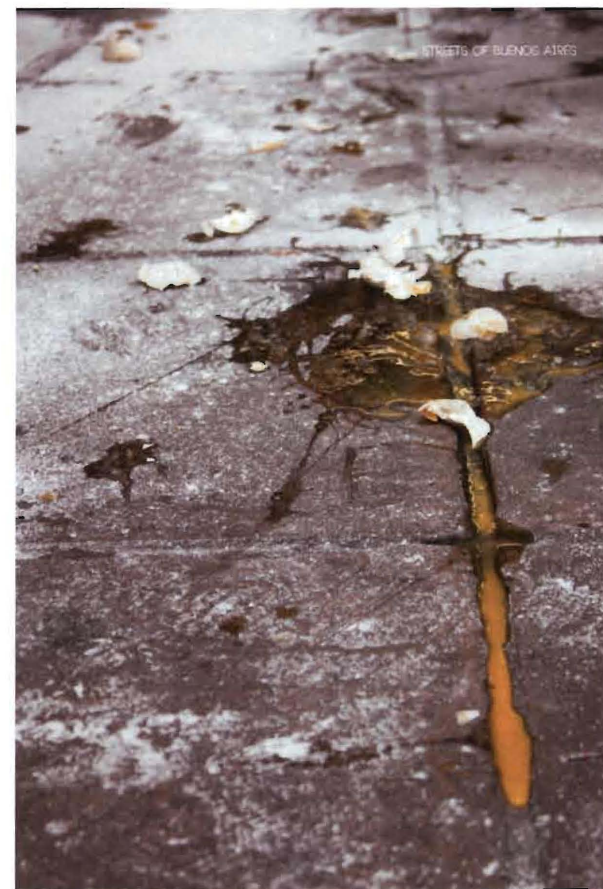
While tango, theatre, and soccer are just introductions to the cultural identity of Buenos Aires, the rest of the chapter will expand upon Argentine traditions and character.





GRADUATION TRADITION

After final exams, it is not uncommon to see graduates doused in a bag of flour as recognition of their achievements. In addition to throwing flour on students, other cooking products such as eggs, ketchup, and milk are often included in this ritual. Remnants of these celebrations can be found throughout the city, usually outside grocery stores and in plazas.





CAFÉ CULTURE

OPPOSITE PAGE

Cafés serve as a center of conversation and socializing. They are full of discussions varying from the serious business, political, and economic issues to the more personal conversations of soccer games and love interests. Numerous Argentines are loyal customers to their café of choice. Some historical figures such as novelist Julio Cortázar and writer Jorge Luis Borges are perfect examples of people who frequented their preferred cafés in the city.

TIME ALONE

RIGHT

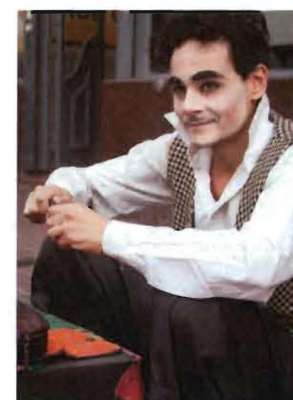
*A visit to a local café alone is also a common occurrence in many *Porteños'* daily routines. While these cafés function as a social center, they also serve as an external place from people's homes where locals can retreat from the city's constant motion. These establishments provide moments of solidarity, which are simply shared between personal thoughts and a *café cortado* (coffee with milk).*

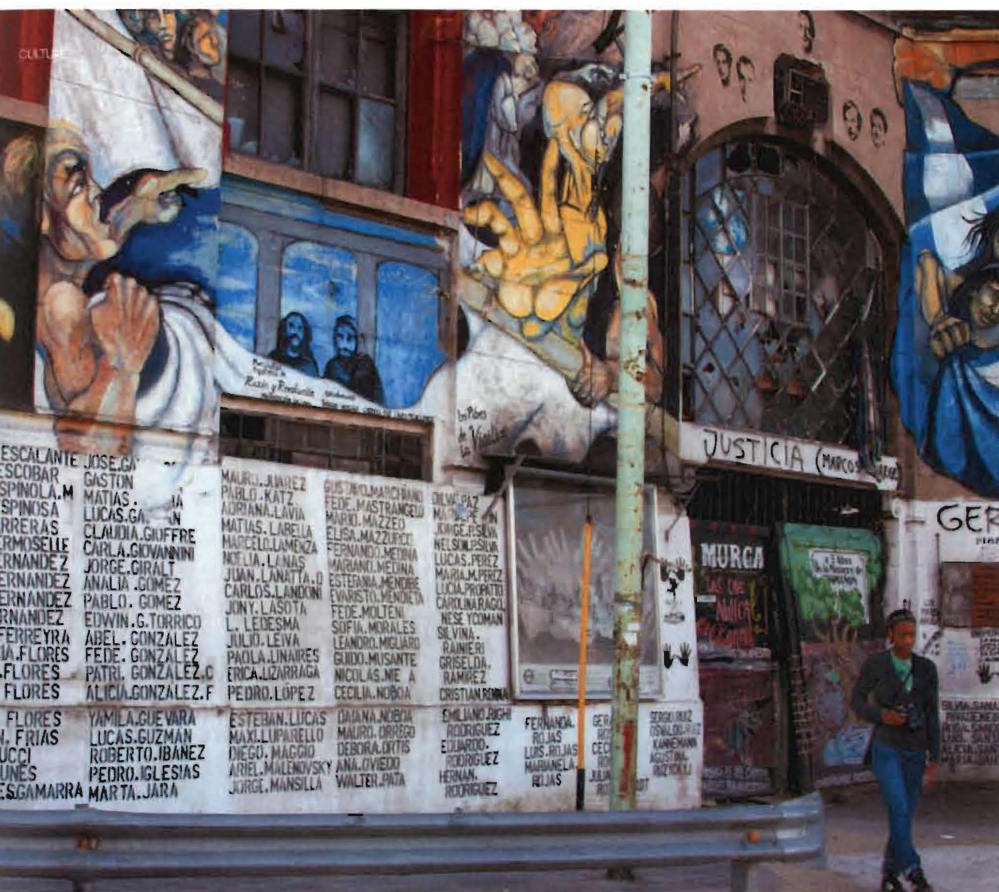




STREET PERFORMERS

On weekends, segments of Buenos Aires' streets are overflowing with vendors. Alongside the array of stands containing handmade crafts, food, and antiques, artists are also performing in the streets. The particular street performers pictured are from the *Feria de San Telmo*, a popular Sunday flea market in San Telmo. Examples of routines that browsing pedestrians may observe include the metallic human statues, mimes, instrumental and vocal performances, puppeteers, and artists painting. While street performances are enjoyable for the common traveler, it is important to recognize the passion and commitment reflected in their craft. For many artists, this may be their primary source of income.





ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

When initially arriving in Buenos Aires, unaccustomed eyes may experience culture shock due to the city's extensive amount of graffiti. The colossal murals, colorful graffiti, and repetitive stencils camouflage Argentina's buildings. Many of these art works are in response to the 2001 economic crisis and other political and social injustices. The mural pictured on the left page covers the walls of the *Republica Cromañon* nightclub where 194 people were killed in an arsonist attack on December 30, 2004. Several of these murals serve as a reminder of the past in hopes that history will not repeat itself.



CITY OF THE DEAD

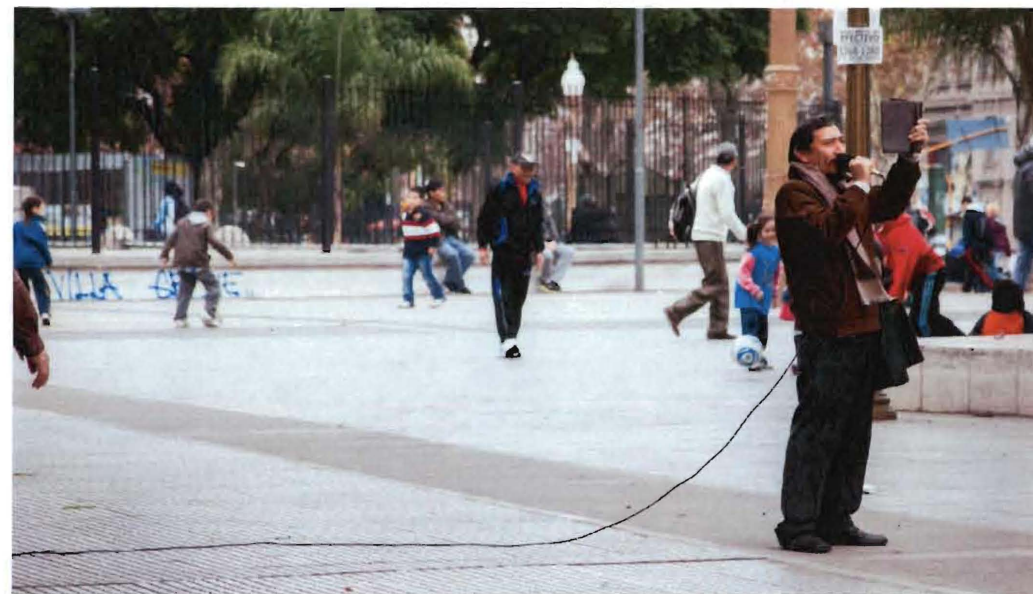
LEFT

While Buenos Aires's streets are full of life, the *Cementerio de la Recoleta* is a city for the deceased. Influential politicians, notable war heroes, and other elite citizens of Argentina occupy the maze of elaborate mausoleums. Evita Peron, the beloved first lady during the late 1940s, also found her resting place within the walls of the *Cementerio de la Recoleta*.

VOICES AT THE PLAZA

RIGHT

Protests and demonstrations play a significant role in Argentine history. However, many parents still share the fear of allowing their children to be involved in political meetings. This concern stems from the period known as the Dirty War when 30,000 left-wing activists and militants "disappeared" between the years of 1976 to 1983. Argentina's military dictatorship was responsible for the "disappearances" of these people who were viewed as a political or ideological threat. The junta proceeded with torturing, questioning, and killing in hopes of silencing the opposition. The mothers of the missing children, known as *Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*, continue to march every Thursday as they have for the past 30 years. The man pictured is speaking to the passing crowd in the *Plaza de Miserere* in the barrio *Once*.



PROFESSIONS

Argentina faced one of the most devastating economic crises in its history starting in 1999 and reaching its apex in 2002. The country had a sizable amount of debt, it was incurring new loans, and the value of the *peso* was decreasing at the start of the twenty-first century. Argentina could not continue to survive on credit. Eventually the public began to secure its money without the help of the Argentine banks; this meant people there were making major withdrawals and sending their money to accounts abroad. Between July and November of 2001, Argentines withdrew approximately US\$20 billion from banks, then entrusted it elsewhere. In attempt to retain money in Argentina, the government imposed a *corralito*, which essentially froze bank accounts for a period of time. The government also prohibited the withdrawal of the US dollar because people were seeking the stability of foreign currency which only made the *peso* weaker. This caused a severe struggle for sectors of the economy that functioned on cash such as taxis and food markets. The final breaking point was when the banks converted all of the money to *pesos*. This caused havoc because prior to the crash, the *peso* had held a one to one ratio with the US dollar, although in very little time, the *peso* had dropped to a third of the previous value. This series of events left Argentines in a state of despair, uncertainty, and distrust in their leaders. People resorted to striking and demonstrations in hopes of their voices being heard.

The economic crash left countless *Porteños* unemployed. Even people who received a high level of education felt the effects as over half of the population found itself below the national poverty line. This decline in social class was difficult for proud Argentines to handle. The people valued their work as not only a means of financial support, but as a way to structure their time and routines; work was part of their identity.

Many people resorted to taking on multiple jobs to try and combat the crash. One taxi driver shared his story as he described the three jobs he was currently balancing. This man needed all of these occupations just to maintain a comfortable life style for him and his dogs.

Owning dogs while living in a city apartment can become quite a burden for some Argentines since they cannot simply let their pets out into a backyard. This inconvenience has provided jobs for people known as *paseaperros*, professional dog walkers. *Paseaperros* can be seen with up to twenty dogs on leashes being pulled through parks and down city sidewalks. *Porteños* are willing to pay dog walkers AR\$120 to AR\$150 per month for this service.





SPECIALIZED BUSINESSES

People of the suburbs and rural United States are accustomed to the idea of visiting a supermarket with little trouble crossing everything off their shopping list. In many larger cities like Buenos Aires, shops have a different layout where they sell variations of one specific product. While superstores like Walmart do exist, it is not uncommon to see an entire store that only contains shoes, yarn, or even just homemade pasta. There are even streets that have multiple businesses devoted to selling one type of merchandise, such as only selling fabric or mannequins. Not only do these businesses specialize, but the tiny stores are also packed from the floor to ceiling with the specific product.

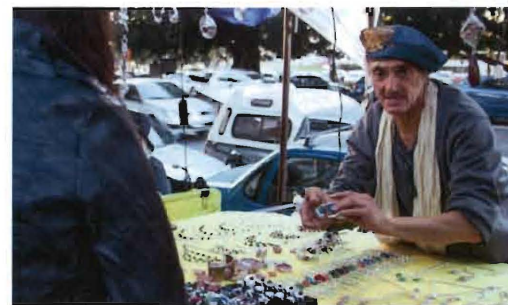




STREETS OF BUENOS AIRES

THE FOOD INDUSTRY

An enormous variety of cuisines can be found in restaurants throughout the city. This not only provides many options for customers, but it establishes food-related companies as a significant sector of employment. According to the UK Trade & Investment Department, over 500,000 people in Argentina are employed by one of the 20,000 food-related companies in Argentina. In addition to the employment that the food industries provide, Argentina is also a world leader for exports in wine, meat, olives, lemons, honey, and candies.



STREET VENDORS

While the *Feria de San Telmo* draws a touristy crowd, the *Feria Artesanal* still remains Buenos Aires's most popular street fair. Over the weekend, hundreds of booths full of handmade crafts, jewelry, and other original works line the *Plaza Intendente Alvear* in *Recoleta*. These artists and merchants put on a tantalizing display of available products to draw the crowds to their booths. Alongside the artisans marketing their merchandise, there are plenty of food vendors serving the hungry shoppers. They sell an assortment of treats including empanadas, fresh-squeezed orange juice, and pastries. Similar to *San Telmo*, there are many street performers in action striving to entertain, while helping pay the bills.



FAILING ECONOMY

The lower classes were not the only citizens affected by the economic crash in 2001. Even white-collar workers found themselves joining the homeless in local soup kitchens. While the economic situation has improved since 2001, people still struggle for stability. Argentine currency remains unreliable and a black-market for the US dollar is common in the streets. In June of 2012, when these photos were taken, the official exchange rate was 4.47 pesos to the US dollar, although, people were willing to illegally exchange 6.15 pesos per US dollar. A mere twenty months later, in February of 2014, the official exchange rate had risen to 7.89 pesos per US dollar, or 11.55 pesos at the "blue rate," otherwise known as the black-market.



WEIGHING THE OPPORTUNITY

Buenos Aires's citizens create 4,500 tons of waste on a daily basis. While many people see these trash bags along the street as an eyesore or filth, others see it as an opportunity to weigh in on making a living. After the economic crash in 2001, many skilled laborers lost their jobs leaving them with few options for employment. Several of the city's poorest turned to being a *cartonero*, otherwise known as a cardboard collector. These workers have their designated territories where they comb through the trash in hopes of finding recyclable materials. *Cartoneros* are able to compile collections of cardboard, paper, metal, plastic, glass, among other materials that they sell to recycling companies by the kilo. The average profit ranges from US\$80 to US\$300 per month.



ONE IS SIMPLY NOT ENOUGH

During these hard economic times, Argentines have found that working one job simply might not be enough. *Porteños* have been resourceful by creating jobs, such as *cartoneros*, and also by finding multiple places of employment. The man pictured above on the right, shared his story of employment. He explained how for the past seventeen years he has owned and rented out an apartment building in the city. This man now lives outside of the Buenos Aires with his family, but he has kept his workshop below the apartments to run his side business. The image shows him completing an order for a gate that will cover a lower-level, city building window.

THE NATIONAL STRIKE

Argentina has a long history of labor unrests. Dating back to June 25, 1912, two thousand farmers organized the first large-scale rural strike in hopes of reaching a more sustainable pay rate. This sparked the tradition of strikes and demonstrations, which has continued for over the past hundred years. During the country's most painful and struggling times, Argentines have come together for a common cause. Some other examples include La Semana Trágica in 1919 where over seven hundred protesters were killed, demonstrations during Perón's rule from 1946-1955, the mourning mothers of La Plaza de Mayo marching after the Dirty War, and strikes following the economic crash in 2001.

Cacerolazos were a direct result of the strikes in 2001. This type of demonstration began when middle-class workers spontaneously started banging pots and pans together in order to show their support for the strike, even if they could not be down in the streets. This legacy lives on today and helps intensify the number of people actively participating in the strikes.

Many of these demonstrations are carried out smoothly, but others end in violence and turmoil. On December 19th and 20th of 2001, for example, thirty people lost their lives in street fights and strikes, which were a response to the economic crash. Another notable strike took place on June 26, 2002. This is known as the Masacre de Avellanda where two men were killed, ninety were wounded, and sixty were arrested by police forces.

During this violent demonstration, twenty-one-year-old demonstrators, Dario Santillan, was glorified as a martyr for his heroic action of trying to save Maximiliano Costeki, who had already been shot by police. Unfortunately, Santillan was shot during his selfless effort to help Costeki. The fact that the police opened fire and killed Argentines for expressing their freedom of speech eternalized their actions and may protests were soon to follow.

Just one day after the ten-year anniversary of the *Masacre de Avellanda*, Argentines gathered in la Plaza de Mayo for another strike. During the *Masacre de Avellanda*, the *piqueters* had set up road blocks with demands for larger unemployment subsidies, food, and medical supplies. In contrast, the 2012 demonstration crowd had the goal of lowering income taxes. The people pictured in this chapter were all involved in the June 27, 2012 strike. President Kirchner eventually raised the income tax in response to the strike, although previous supporter, Hugo Moyano, and others still claimed that the change wasn't sufficient. Kirchner's approval ratings have continued to decline as issues of inflation, violent crime, and high-profile corruption only continue to grow. The N8 strike, held on November 8, 2012, demonstrated a clear view of people's dissatisfaction as more than 30,000 protestors gathered around the president's home. Thousands of others throughout the world joined in the strike from their respective locations.





ABANDONED LEFT

On the day of the strike, *9 de Julio Avenue* appeared to be a disorganized parking lot, rather than the widest avenue in the world having nine lanes of traffic. This vacancy, accompanied by the dull roar of the crowds in the *Plaza de Mayo*, was the first signs of the nearby strike.



THE MASSES

On July 27, 2012 approximately 25,000 of the estimated 150,000 people expected to strike, flooded the streets. While most would consider this mass of people a monumental success, Argentines judged the situation with less than satisfactory views. The strike fell short of expectations primarily due to the lack of complete participation by the taxi and bus drivers. The *Subte* system, Argentina's subway system, also kept running, which allowed workers to carry on their normal days and dismiss the strike.





THE DESIRE FOR REFORM

Hugo Moyano, leader of Argentina's General Labor Confederation union, organized this national strike and was on stage supporting the need for reforms on income taxes during the event. The problem is rooted in the fact that even though salaries have increased in recent years, people are now being bumped into higher tax brackets. This increase in taxes leaves workers unable to benefit from the rise in salary, so they are demanding the threshold for income tax payments be altered. President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner did not initially support the request, although she did respond to the truck drivers' strike just one week earlier. These truck drivers had stopped their work, causing fuel shortages and a speedy response from President Kirchner. Once the truckers signed for a 25.5 percent wage increase starting on July 1, 2012, the strike was lifted.



DIVERSITY IN PARTICIPANTS

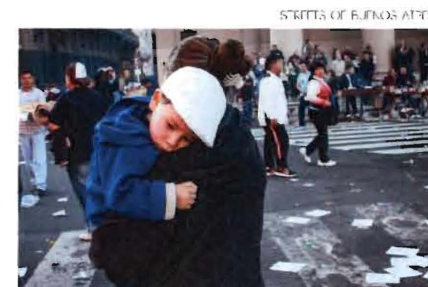
While Argentines all gathered with a similar goal in mind, it was a diverse assembly of people. The crowd consisted of men, women, children, students, elderly, and union workers. The truckers were the predominate union represented, but there were also other workers including trash collectors, newspaper and food distributors, some rural workers, and people involved with Argentina's health and textile sectors.



INFORMAL SEPARATION

While no one was directing people where to stand, there was an unspoken agreement regarding where certain groups should locate themselves. At the perimeter of the strike stood many women, children, elderly, and what appeared to be college students. Continuing in from the outside ring, one could expect to be surrounded by a majority of middle-aged, *mestizo* men who were part of the unions present. The *machismo* attitude was also more prevalent towards the center of the congregation.





THE EXHAUSTION

The workers gathered together teeming with excitement and passion for the day's events at the intersection of *Belgrano Avenue* and *9 de Julio Avenue*. The strikers commenced at 9 am and the march carried on till 4:15 pm. The strike ended in the iconic *Plaza de Mayo* in front of the *Casa Rosada*, which is Argentina's government house. This plaza is historically known as a centralized location for strikes. One example of a group that regularly marches each Thursday are *las Madres de Plaza de Mayo* who still search for answers to the whereabouts of their children who disappeared during the Dirty War.



SOCIALIZING, DANCING, AND EATING

While shuffling through the crowds, one becomes in tuned with a surprising sense of joy and excitement. Not that anger or violence are immediately expected, but the atmosphere represents more of a festival feel than a revolutionary movement. People were still very serious about the cause for which they gathered, but they also celebrated with street food, beers, drumming, chanting, dancing, laughing, and conversing. As shown above, all of the excitement also left a trail of trash much like festivals do.

LIFE OF THE CITY

Beginning around World War II, part of the poor population living in rural areas migrated to Buenos Aires in search of employment. Eventually the city's population tripled and soon contained one third of the population of Argentina. Buenos Aires, the city along with the suburbs in the Buenos Aires province, has maintained this percentage into the twenty-first century. With all of these people living in such a concentrated area, there is immense diversity: varying religions, races, and political views fill the city.

Most Latin American countries have a high Catholic population. Argentina follows this pattern as ninety percent of its population classify as Roman Catholics. Judaism, Protestantism, and other religious sects are also present in the city, but are not as prevalent as Catholicism. The religious tolerance within the country began with Alberdi's influence, as he believed that immigrants would need faith and marriage as they expanded into this new world. Although, there is a long-standing joke that Argentina's religion is Freudianism due to the significant participation in psychoanalysis.

There are forty-eight *barrios* (neighborhoods), which are further grouped into fifteen *comunas* (communes) within Buenos Aires. Each *barrio* has its own personality, which is established by the demographic and character of the *Porteños* who occupy it. The photography within this book primarily captures scenes from La Boca, Palermo, Puerto Madero, Recoleta, Balvanera (includes Once), and San Telmo.

Another facet of Argentines' lives emerges after sunset as the prominent nightlife springs to life. It is not unusual for people to begin their night at 2 a.m. and carry until the morning at clubs and nearby bars.

Argentines come from many different walks of life, but the city is their common denominator. The following chapter elaborates on a few key points in Argentines' lives and how people in this diverse community still relate to each other through common locations, interests, and educational backgrounds.





BARRIO ONCE

Once (ohn-seh) is full of an assortment of people and landmarks. The demographics of the population show a strong representation of Jews, Peruvians, and Koreans.

The diversity can also be seen in the range of public landmarks. One of the most desirable malls within the city, Mercado de Abasto, is located in Once, along with the Estacion Once, the Museo Casa Carlos Gardel, and the AMIA building and memorial.

Founded in 1894, AMIA is a Jewish community organization that helps redirect job openings to Jewish, but also non-Jewish people throughout Argentina. The AMIA community fell victim to a terrorist attack on July 18, 1994 where a car bomb demolished the organization's building and killed eighty-six people. It has since been restored, but people still hold an active memory of the event since the case essentially remains unsolved. The top left picture shows the memorial, along with the poles that are put in front of Jewish centers through the city to prevent further attacks.



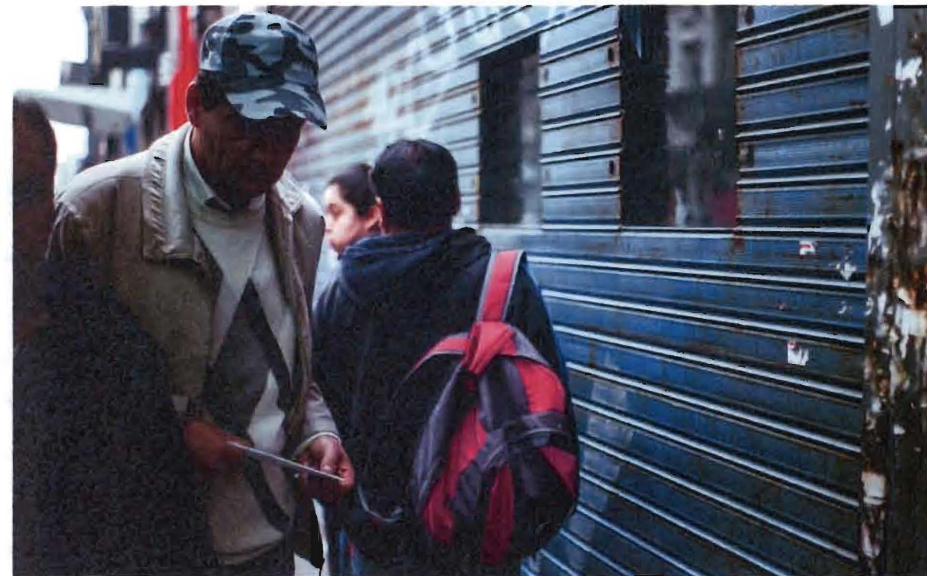


LA BOCA'S PORTS

Back in the 1880's, Italian and Spanish immigrants were the main inhabitants of the *barrio La Boca*. Many of them found work at the meatpacking plants and warehouses near the port. Alberdi put an emphasis on the utilization waterways to help build the country. The rivers served as arteries transporting raw materials to Buenos Aires and out to sea. After years of water pollution, the ports have been abandoned, leaving only distant memories of the once booming exports.

THE COLORFUL DRAW

La Boca is well known for its brightly colored buildings. This tradition began when the immigrants working at the ports leading to the *Rio de la Plata* went to spruce up the boat yards with a fresh coat of paint. After enriching the ports with the new paint job, workers took the extra supplies home to repaint their own residences.



TRANSPORTATION WITHIN THE CITY

Buenos Aires's streets are notorious for their impatient, reckless drivers and bumper-to-bumper traffic. While few do have personal vehicles, the Argentines depend heavily on public transportation. The quickest and most reliable option in the city is the *Subte*. This subway system is relatively small for the size of the city, but has been functioning since 1913. For those who prefer street transportation, the taxis run throughout the night to aid the lively nightlife of Buenos Aires. Trains are another mode of public transport, but are utilized for further commutes to the outskirts of the city. Walking is also a great way to tour the city, considering it supplies opportunities to explore along the way.



THE COLECTIVO

Another form of transportation that people rely on is the bus system. Buenos Aires's buses are known as *colectivos*, which traditionally had customized interior decorations with hand painted, exterior designs. Modern day *colectivos* are more reserved, but are recognized for their cartoon-like appearance and distinguished color combinations like the bus pictured above. A standard fare costs around AR\$1.25 in change.



PICKPOCKETERS

Pigeons flock throughout the city and while they can be fun to feed as the little boy is doing above, their existence plays into a classic pickpocketing scam. There were a few unfortunate members of our group who had "pigeon excrement" thrown on them. Seconds later a person would run up, napkins conveniently in hand, to help clean up. These deceiving people then tried to take a wallet, camera, or whatever was readily available. By being informed about this possibility, some friends were able to avoid being robbed, but others were not as lucky. These pickpocketing occurrences are another sign of the economic despair.

DOWN AND OUT

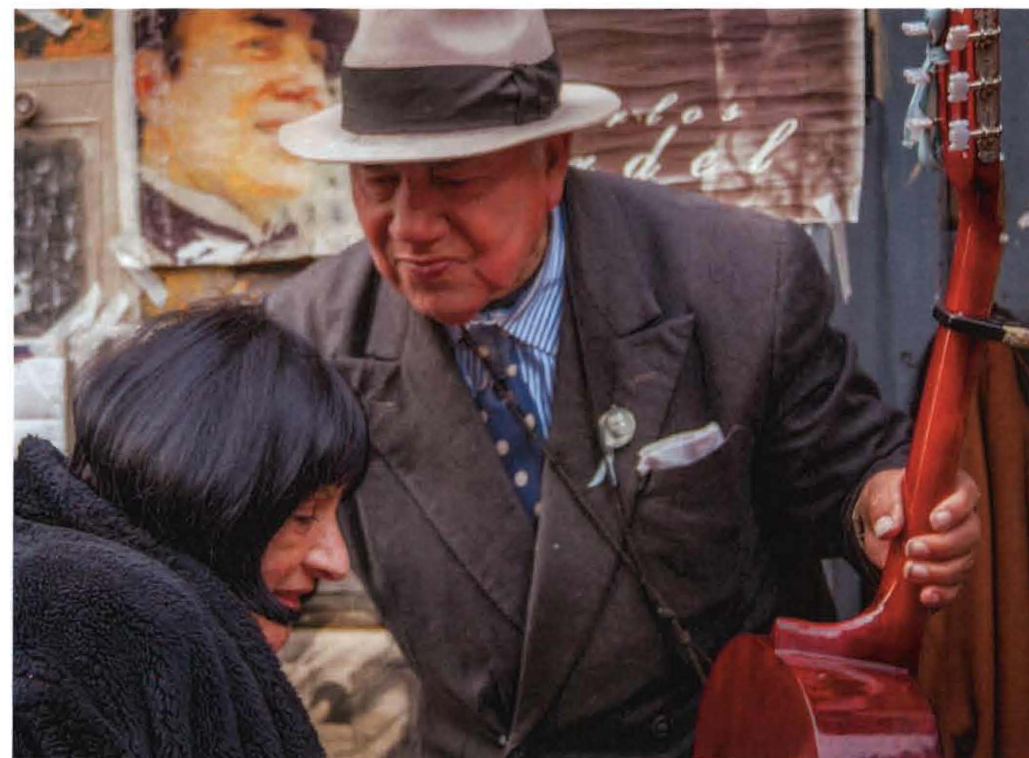
After the economic crash in 2001, unemployment rates skyrocketed to 22.45 percent in 2002. Since then, unemployment rates have steadily declined and were down to 7.2 percent in August of 2013. Even with this sign of improvement, many people still are suffering and live on the streets. It is estimated that 15,000 people in Buenos Aires are homeless, with 4,500 of those people being children.





PORTEÑO APPEARANCE

Porteños pride themselves for their visual appearance. They are perceived as being attractive, glamorous people who are sophisticated and cultured. They strive to maintain this prestigious appearance through their style and attention to body image. For example, Argentina is one of the few places left in the world where it is not uncommon to see women meandering through the streets exhibiting their fur coats. *Porteños* also go to great lengths to maintain a pristine body image, which feeds Buenos Aires's exceedingly high percentage of residents who have had plastic surgery.



STREET OF BUENOS AIRES



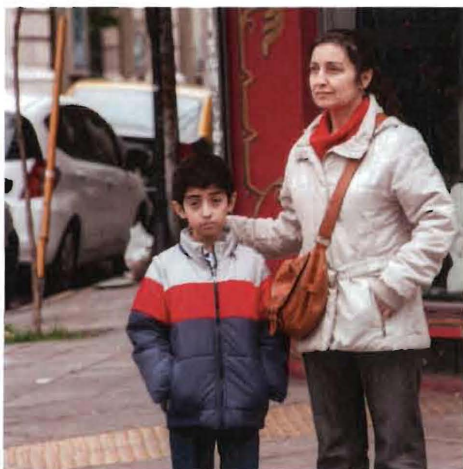
EDUCATION

Measuring above ninety-five percent, Argentina has the highest rate of literacy in Latin America. The outstanding literacy rate is attributed to the twelve years of free schooling that are provided and required for children. Teaching is divided into primary school, which covers years 1 through 6 or 7, and secondary school, for grades 7 or 8 through 12. During secondary school, the students' classes become more specialized with an academic or professional focus. Upon completing the twelve years and passing an entrance exam, students are able to attend one of Argentina's thirty-eight national universities to complete a degree.

IDENTITY CRISIS

People typically go through identity crises at some point in their lives, although Argentines have some additional, external catalysts to initiate these personal crises. Ancestry is one topic that may incite identity crises. A decent portion of the Portehos population originated from Europe, specifically Italy, yet these Argentines are classified as being Latin American. This confusion and sense of double consciousness has left Argentines at a loss when choosing the culture with which to identify. The economic decline at the start of the 21st century also affects the public's sense of security and stability.

Argentines have combated their internal disorientation by following the teachings of Freud and undergoing psychoanalysis. Considering there are three times more psychiatrists and psychologists in Buenos Aires alone than in the state of New York, this appears to be the most common solution.



STREETS OF BUENOS AIRES



RESTAURANT TIPS

There are a few things that are good to consider when venturing out to restaurants in Buenos Aires. First, do not be surprised by charge that will automatically appear on your bill labeled as a *cubierto*. This cost is to cover bread or small appetizers and the use of the eating utensils. Another expense that many Americans may not be accustomed to is the cost of water since the water served is all bottled. A final tip to remember when dining out in the city is to ask for your check, *la cuenta*, when you are ready to leave. Argentines are very talkative and will assume you are there to visit until *la cuenta* is requested.



TRADITIONAL ARGENTINE CUISINE

There are select foods and drinks Argentina is known for. If in search of the acclaimed beef that the country provides, head to a *parrillada*, which is a grill where steaks, along with other cuts of beef, are sold. Other notable dishes include South American *empanaditas*, Italian *hoagies*, or British *alfajor* stuffed with *dulce de leche*.

Mate, a green Paraguayan tea, is a commonly served drink, which contains just as much caffeine as a cup of coffee.



OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE

Buenos Aires lives up to its nickname the "Paris of South America" through the European café culture, theaters, and cuisine that includes a South American spin. Despite some political and monetary instability in the country, Argentines still have access to some of the most luxurious commodities at desirable prices in comparison to European countries. Argentines also have access to free education, they utilize freedom of speech and religion, and they have many other opportunities, which can easily be taken for granted. With all of these possibilities, Argentines have the opportunity for a good quality of life in the city of Buenos Aires.



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Currently a senior at Ball State University, McMasters is pursuing a BFA in Visual Communication and a minor in Graphic Arts Technologies. She will graduate in May of 2014. After graduation, McMasters is planning to continue her design and photo work abroad through a trip to Iceland. Along with two friends, they plan to research and document sustainable fabric practices of the country, such as the wool and fish leather industries. Their collaboration will be showcased in their exhibition, REsensitize, which will be on display on Ball State University's campus in January 2015. Upon the completion of this project McMasters hopes to establish a career in the design world, which will coincide with her freelancing work, photography, and travel.

